

Nam June Paik (1932 – 2006, South Korea / USA)

Global Groove

1973

Video, 28 minutes, 32 seconds

"This is a glimpse of a video landscape of tomorrow, when you will be able to switch to any TV station on the earth, and TV Guides will be as fat as the Manhattan telephone book." These are the opening sentences of *Global Groove*, a seminal work in the history of video art.

Global Groove is a critical proposition in the form of a television programme and a radical manifesto on global communications in a media saturated world. Rendered as an electronic collage, Paik has used a synthesiser to alter the image sequences, introducing a kaleidoscope of bright colours, solarisation, and colour saturation. Techniques of embedding and overprinting change the form of the sequences, as dancer's bodies become multiplied and abstract shapes shift and move across the existing footage.

Global Groove's intercut sequences include dancers performing to Mitch Ryder's *Devil with a Blue Dress On*, Allen Ginsberg singing, a Merce Cunningham dance video, and a reading by John Cage. Iconic segments such as Charlotte Moorman's *TV Cello* joins Paik's introduction of *Participation TV* which requests viewers to follow his instructions while listening to Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*.

Marshall McLuhan's theories on technology heavily influenced Paik, and many of his works reference McLuhan's proverb "The Medium is the Message." *Global Groove* refers to McLuhan's concept of the 'global village' (1967), which described a simultaneous happening or all-at-once-ness where everyone is connected by technology and its system of structures, a concept pertinent to today.

Global Groove by Nam June Paik, 1973. Courtesy of Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), New York



Nam June Paik, *Global Groove*, 1973. Courtesy of Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), New York. *The Medium is the Message*, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

Carolee Schneemann (1939 – 2019, USA)

Devour

2003 - 4

Dual channel video installation, 9 minutes

Devour is a work about menace that aims to disturb and question the tenor of normality. Presented as a fast-paced and dense montage of intercut sequences and found audio, Schneemann's footage includes documentation from Sarajevo, Palestine, and Haiti, as well as images from Guantanamo Bay Detention Camp. War-torn violent imagery redolent of a news reel or media reportage is coalesced with fragile, tender moments of domestic pleasures and the natural world. The stark contrast of visual content from car crashes, burning buildings, and victims' bodies of war-torn Sarajevo alternate with those of cats, birds, and a close-up of a mouth sucking up long thick strands of noodles to a haunting, slowed down sound track. The artwork's title stands for the voraciously synthetic, head-on rush of contemporary media, and the corresponding, near-addictive impulse of its consumers.

For the artist, *Devour* has a direct connection to the issue of free speech. It is informed by the political volatility of the United States and its treatment of other countries to aid the advancement of its own.

Schneemann's mantra of liberation that prevailed in her earlier work, as a pioneer of Feminist Body Art, female sexuality and empowerment, continues in works like *Devour*, which recall the artist's highly politicised films *Souvenir of Lebanon* (1983-2006) and *Viet-Flakes* (1962-67). *Devour* furthers the artist's exploration of how Feminist strategies can be integrated into an imaging of current global issues, bringing together an acute analysis of domestic and public realms and how bodies interact in space when threatened by a collapse of social order.

© The Estate of Carolee Schneemann. Courtesy the Estate of Carolee Schneemann, Galerie Lelong & Co., and P•P•O•W, New York



Carolee Schneemann, *Devour*, 2003-4. © The Estate of Carolee Schneemann.
Courtesy the Estate of Carolee Schneemann, Galerie Lelong & Co., and P•P•O•W,
New York. *The Medium is the Message*, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam
Hartnett.

George Barber (born 1958, Guyana, lives and works in London)

Absence of Satan

1985

Video, 4 minutes, 50 seconds

George Barber is one of the pioneers of Scratch Video, a genre which emerged in the UK during the mid-1980s. Utilising found images from film and television, Scratch Video cuts and splices existing footage to create newly formed sequences and narratives. Scratch Video has been compared to the record-scratching techniques of hip-hop music, hence its name.

Absence of Satan is a deft reworking of cinematic narrative and cliché.

Created in 1985, Barber re-edited one-inch master copies of movies from Columbia Pictures featuring scenes with actors Sally Field, Paul Newman, and Brooke Shields. Barber has used colour saturation, overprinting, and collage in his use of individual film clips which are woven together to create an original score. Barber was interested in "disrespecting the rectangle," a method of breaking up the television image with abstract elements. This was a strategy employed by Nam June Paik, a notable influence on Barber, who used an experimental approach to counter the domination of public service programming and commercial television.

With its pulsating soundtrack and famous sequence of Paul Newman closing a car door cut with a helicopter, *Absence of Satan* is one of Barber's finest video works and a foremost example of Scratch Video.

Courtesy of George Barber and LUX, London



George Barber, *Absence of Satan*, 1984. Courtesy of George Barber and LUX, London. *The Medium is the Message*, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

John Smith (born 1952, UK, lives and works in London)

Who Are We?

2016

Video, 4 minutes, 38 seconds

In *Who Are We?*, acclaimed film maker John Smith reworks television footage from a BBC Question Time debate broadcast a few weeks prior to the UK's vote on Brexit. Television debates like Question Time became increasingly confrontational and heated as the vote neared. A vicious attitude of nationalism became progressively and visibly apparent with such attitudes reinforced on primetime television's dubiously impartial coverage.

By editing the existing Question Time broadcast, Smith's video foregrounds the now normalised extremism in political discourse and society, and highlights the media's role in exacerbating such views.

As David Dimbleby repeatedly prompts in the video, "You Sir, up there on the far right", an audience member shouts, "Get our identity back – vote leave!"

Following the results of the Brexit vote on June 23rd 2016, Britain left the European Union on January 31st 2020.

Courtesy of John Smith and LUX, London



John Smith, *Who Are We?* 2016. Courtesy of John Smith and LUX, London. *The Medium is the Message*, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

Kevin Atherton (born 1958, UK)

Television Interview

1984

Video, 28 minutes

In this wry and acutely observed video, Kevin Atherton harangues the cast of the popular soap opera *Coronation Street* on the demarcation of high and low culture.

Displayed to reflect the context of an interview across a table, Atherton plays the role of interviewer and inquisitor. He pauses the episode and the characters' monologues mid-flow to ask questions about the status of video art and the disempowered position of the television viewer. Talking back to the characters who are completely unaware, Atherton twists the narrative of the episode through his questioning by using the existing characters' lines as prompts for his own responses and further enquiries. In doing so, Atherton reveals the mono-directionality of broadcast television.

At one point Atherton asks, "Are you aware of the tremendous affect you have on your audience? I mean there are people who think you actually exist." This is followed by him asking, "Have you heard of video art?" to which Mavis nervously replies while busy sorting magazines in the newsagents, "Well, yes I think I've heard of it, I'm not sure." Atherton is also self-deprecating about the role of video art telling a hapless character who professes no knowledge of the medium that "You have to force yourself to watch video art."

Bringing humour and wit to his enquiry, *Television Interview* addresses the construction of the media image in relation to television's mode of representation and video art's appropriation and deconstruction of these.

Courtesy of Kevin Atherton and LUX, London



Kevin Atherton, *Television Interview*, 1984. Courtesy of Kevin Atherton and LUX, London. *The Medium is the Message*, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

Jesse Mclean (born 1975, USA)

Somewhere Only We Know

2009

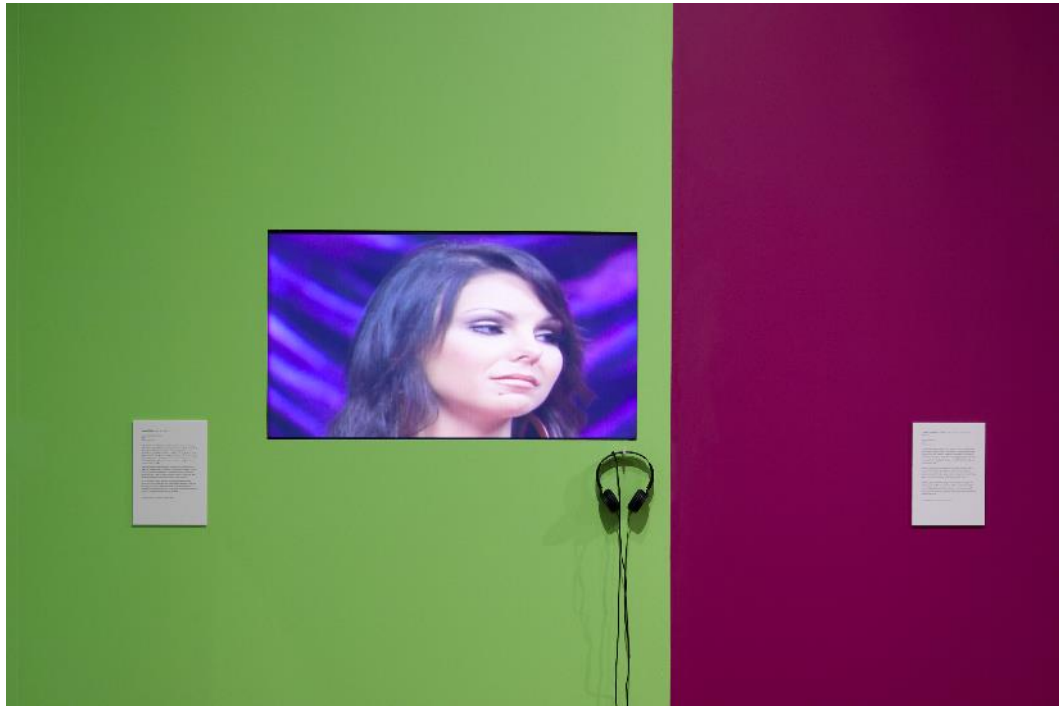
Video, 5 minutes

In *Somewhere Only We Know* we witness anxious televised scenes of individuals awaiting their fate. Drawing on the genre of television talent shows, the video features clips from a mix of programmes such as *Project Runway* and *America's Next Top Model* amongst others. Mindful of the pressures of such shows and the life-changing promises that they play on, the video begins with sequences of close up clips of contestants who battle to retain their composure as emotions run high and nervous expressions turn tearful.

The video breaks with footage from an earthquake that interrupts live television, seen through the reactions of contestants in the Big Brother house. In juxtaposing the fate of a contestant awaiting news from a talent show with a real live natural disaster, McLean's video hints at the fantasies offered through television and its fragile existence.

As the ubiquity of reality television and talent shows affirm their dominance, McLean's work brings to the fore the desires of audiences who tune in to watch these programmes. Part entertainment, part popularity contest, McLean's work is a reminder of how television and its content is a conscious reflection of its audience.

Courtesy of the artist and Video Data Bank, Chicago



Jesse McLean, *Somewhere Only We Know*, 2009. Courtesy of the artist and Video Data Bank, Chicago. *The Medium is the Message*, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

Robyn Walton (lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau)
Peter Cleveland (lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau)

Dead Band
2020
Mixed media

Dead Band is a newly conceived artwork that connects with the historic Radio 1YA mast atop the Gus Fisher Gallery building. Through a live signal made visible through multiple television screens in the gallery, the mast is intimated into the space fifty-nine years after radio broadcasting ended at Shortland Street Studios.

The historic red and white radio tower gathers junk signals in the obsolete television spectrum, eavesdropping on networks such as wireless local area networks, mobile phones, and atmospheric noise. Now surrounded by skyscrapers in the heart of Auckland's central business district, the building's original function lays dormant. In *Dead Band*, the building's broadcasting activity as former radio and television studios is re-purposed and overwritten through this installation with a new form of agency.

For the artists, "Such background noise mediates an entrée into a physical world of objects via an unheard conversation... The secret life, or subterranean essence, of the radio mast can be accessed by allowing its participation, or collaboration, as a non-human agent."

Courtesy of the artists



Robyn Walton & Peter Cleveland, *Dead Band*, 2020. Courtesy of the artists. *The Medium is the Message*, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

Joe Sheehan (born 1976, Aotearoa, lives and works in Whanganui-a-Tara)

The Quick and the Dead

2013

Argillite, Basalt

The Quick and the Dead is a collection of hand-carved remote controls. The title is a biblical phrase that is broadly used in popular culture to refer to an in-between-state.

Rendered in different varieties of natural stone, the shape, recesses, and undulations of familiar types of television remote controls take form. Some are realised in fragments, their corners or edges broken, while others retain their whole. These anachronistic forms acknowledge a continual cycle of invention, use, and redundancy, hinting at the plethora of unwanted technological apparatus that is produced as upgrades and newer models are made.

Carefully chosen by the artist, the sculptures on display here are made from argillite and basalt, with the origin of each noted on the associated label text. The materiality of these objects brings renewed attention to the formal qualities of an overlooked item which wouldn't normally hold aesthetic appeal. By being realised in stone, its fragility, colour, density, and surface texture contribute to a renewed look at an everyday object that could be read as an archaeology of contemporary culture as seen from the future.

In an Aotearoa New Zealand context, Sheehan's sculptures may also relate to toki held in museum collections, which, as everyday items, were seldom afforded the status of objects of rarity defined by Pākehā culture. Through Sheehan's series, this imbalance is redressed as he suggests that everyday objects are better and more valid representations of contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand culture.

Courtesy of the artist and Tim Melville Gallery



Joe Sheehan, *The Quick and the Dead*, 2013. Courtesy of the artist and Tim Melville Gallery. *The Medium is the Message*, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

Claudia Kogachi (born 1995, Japan, lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau)

Go the All Blacks

2019

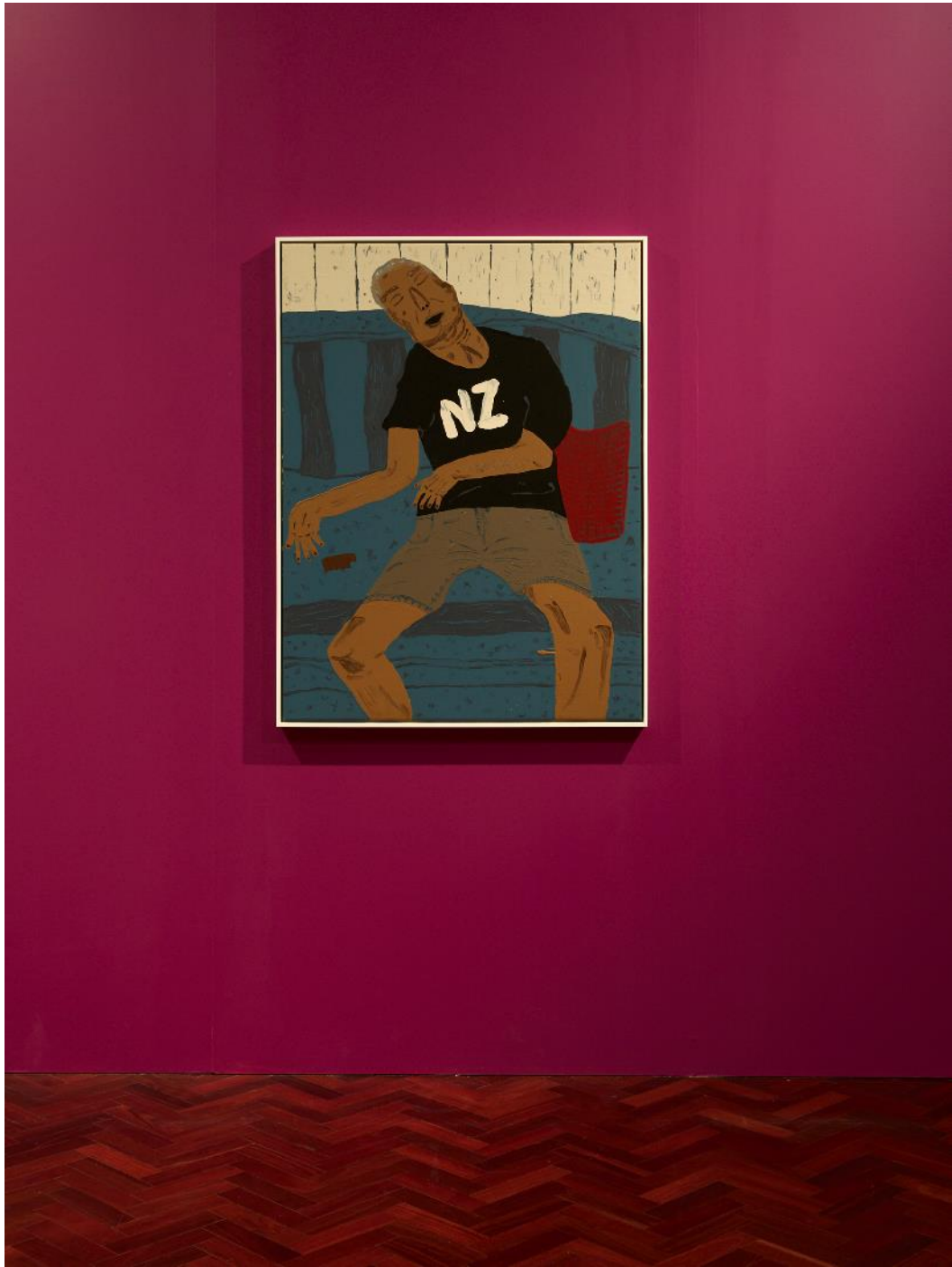
Acrylic on canvas

Go the All Blacks features the artist's eighty-nine year old grandfather who has fallen asleep in front of the television. This painting was made alongside two other pieces by the artist that showed her grandfather sleeping on the couch in various positions. Kogachi notes that he had a love for eating, reading, sleeping, and watching TV. This painting captures him enjoying retirement after having served in the police force for over thirty years.

Kogachi's grandfather had been a fan of American football but fell in love with the All Blacks when the artist and her mother moved to Aotearoa New Zealand. She says "I myself have never felt a tingling of interest towards the sport so the image of my old Jiichan wearing an All Blacks t-shirt while fast asleep was an image I had to paint."

Kogachi's distinctive style of painting is nostalgically reminiscent of a Microsoft Paint programme. The flattening of the figures and skewed downward perspective, works to invite the viewer into the painting's scene. *Go the All Blacks* is a tender depiction and, like many of the artist's paintings that feature members of her family, reflect familiar and shared experiences.

Courtesy of the artist and Sanderson Contemporary



Claudia Kogachi, *Go the All Blacks*, 2019. Courtesy of the artist and Sanderson Contemporary. *The Medium is the Message*, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

Yvonne Todd (born 1973, Aotearoa, lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau)

Valley Candle

2008

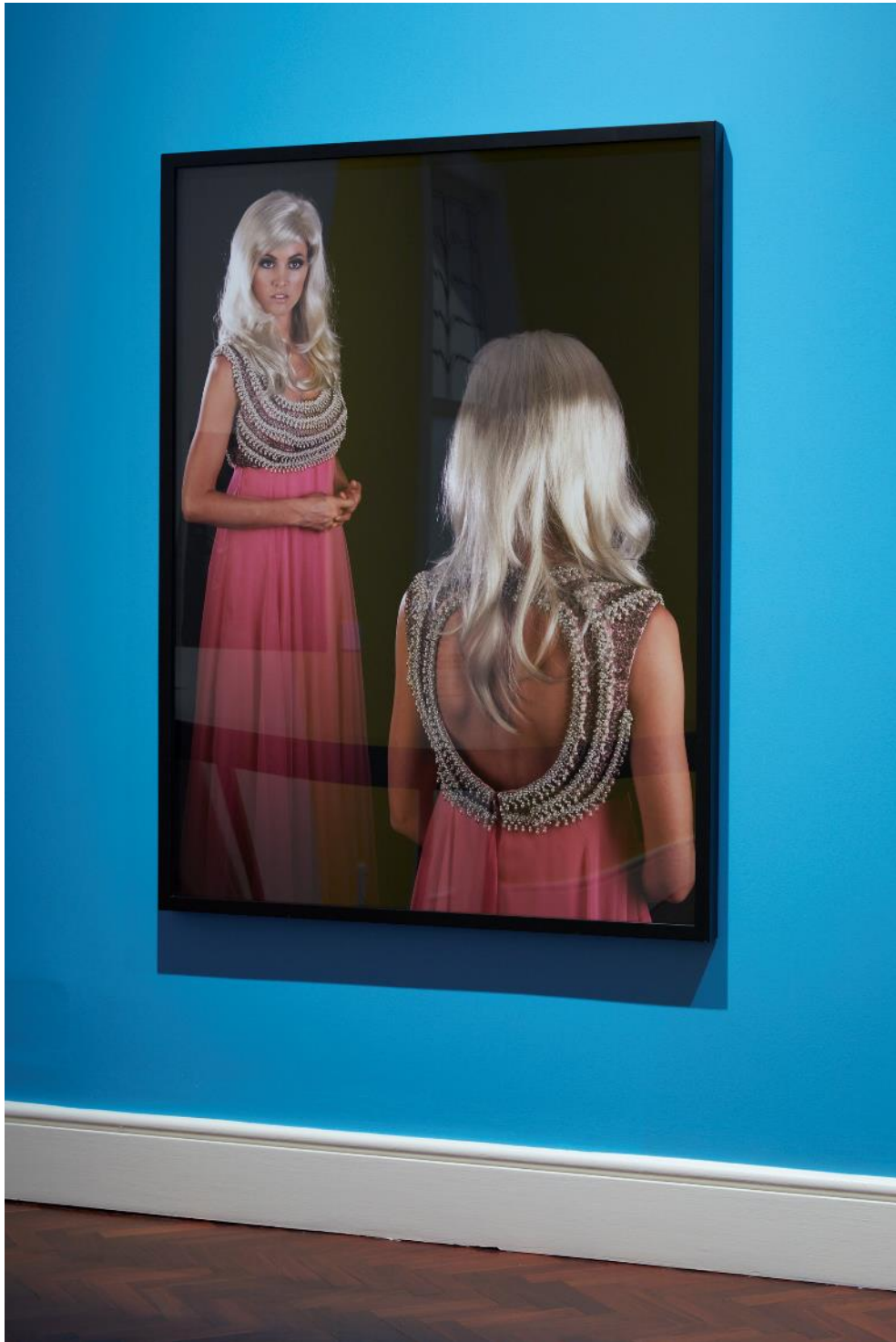
Lightjet print

Valley Candle is from Yvonne Todd's 2008 series *Dawn of the Gland*. Taken with a large-format camera and tripod in her studio, Todd has used photo-shop to blend two views of the same woman in the image who appears to be regarding her own reflection critically in a mirror.

Costume is key in Todd's work, and here the subject wears a pink chiffon and brocade gown by American designer Bob Mackie who has dressed many entertainment icons including Judy Garland, Liza Minnelli and Bette Midler. This pink designer gown was previously owned by South Pacific star Mitzi Gaynor whose chirpy persona is at odds with the unease of the subject in Todd's photograph.

Foregrounding the performance of femininity in her work, Todd's photograph recalls the glamorous world of television, where personae's are created through elaborate costumes and the dazzling lights of stardom await.

Courtesy of the artist, and The University of Auckland Art Collection



Yvonne Todd, *Valley Candle*, 2008. Courtesy of the artist and The University of Auckland Art Collection. *The Medium is the Message*, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

Janet Lilo (born 1982, Ngāpuhi, Samoan / Niue / Aotearoa, lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau)

The Interface Project

2010-11

Digital Videos 1-7, each 10 minutes

The Interface Project is a suite of seven documentary videos made following the Auckland Supercity changeover. Filmed on the streets of West Auckland, Janet Lilo leads relaxed question and answer sessions with the people she meets allowing them to share their thoughts on her questions which range from the accessibility of information about Aotearoa's political parties to who will win the upcoming World Cup.

Lilo's editing ensures that no one voice dominates and the videos reveal the charisma of its interviewees which are largely Pasifika and Māori, ranging from a sweet elderly lady in an electric shopping cart to school students. When engaging in conversation with her interviewees, it is clear just how influential forms of popular culture like television are on the subject's preferences.

The Interface Project is a candid snapshot of a community at a particular place and time and demonstrates the pleasures of engaging in light hearted dialogue with others. When asking an older man which hip-hop star he prefers, Biggie or Tupac, he replies with certainty 'Biccie'.

The documentary's title is a dual reference to the technological interface of the internet and the act of face to face dialogue with another person. Akin to the on street interviews operated by media and news channels, *The Interface Project* demonstrates a mode of interacting with others that is both caring, humorous and genuine.

Courtesy of the artist



Janet Lilo, *The Interface Project*, 2010-11. Courtesy of the artist. *The Medium is the Message*, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

Edith Amituanai (born 1980, Aotearoa, lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau)

The Amituanai Family Lotu, from Ioka

2004

LED print

Courtesy of the artist, and The University of Auckland Art Collection



Gordon H. Brown (born 1931, Aotearoa)

Home of the late Mrs. Ethel McCahon, Chair
2004

Photographic print

Courtesy of the artist, and The University of Auckland Art Collection



TVNZ Station Colour Bars

Painted here is a reproduction of the television colour bar used at Shortland Street Studios. With a vertical and horizontal red band, this colour bar was nicknamed "the bucket of blood" by some technicians.

Analogue equipment such as television cameras, transmission links and videotape machines needed constant adjustment. Individual television programmes transmitted sequentially could look different to the viewer at home, with some looking brighter or dimmer than the next, colour levels too high or too low and varying signal strength from the studio causing interference to the picture. To overcome these issues, a standard colour bar reference was introduced. The output of the colour bar generator's signal was fed to all rooms in the broadcasting studios, so that all technical equipment could be aligned to a common standard.

The white bar and the colour bars show the maximum strength the adjustments should be set to whilst the black bar shows the minimum darkness of the transmitted picture. Colour bars were recorded at the start of every tape recording at the television studio. The sound operator would send out a test tone to be recorded simultaneously with the colour bars, a procedure called 'recording bars and tone.' Theoretically, the transmitted picture was intended to be seen exactly as it was when recorded.

Due to the stability of digital equipment, there is not the same requirement to do as many alignments as there was with analogue devices. However, colour bars are still used.

Painted by James Duncan



The Medium is the Message, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

Mole Richardson 2KW Fresnel Studio Light

Mole-Richardson is an American stage lighting instrument named after a motion picture lighting manufacturing company originally based in Hollywood, California. The company was founded in 1927 by Pietro Mule who had begun selling incandescent tungsten lighting to the film industry, which allowed for a more natural and silent form of lighting.

The light shown here was used in Shortland Street Studios and would have been suspended from a lighting grid controlled by the lighting director. The benefits of a lighting grid meant that the studio floor could be fully utilised for sets without any restrictions and cameras could be moved around on pedestals.

The light has two metal rings at the side and could be panned and tilted from the studio floor via a pole held by the lighting director. The hook of the pole would engage in the ring which went through a mechanism in the frame of the light that enabled it to be moved from side to side, or up and down.

This light is one of two still in existence after forty years and both continue to be used in Auckland's current TVNZ studios. However, due to the amount of power used by tungsten halogen lamps, many television studios like TVNZ are converting their studio lights to LED.

Courtesy of Nigel Windsor, TVNZ



The Medium is the Message, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

Studio Production Board

Studio production boards were mounted on the wall outside of a studio to give staff, presenters and visitors the information as to which room was the correct one to enter. The name of the television production, the director and floor manager along with the date would be chalked up on the board.

Staff and visitors on the studio floor need to follow a strict code of conduct whilst a television show is recorded. Crew cannot talk during a recording as their voices can be picked up by the microphones. Visitors also need to ask permission from the floor manager to enter to ensure the recording runs smoothly.

This particular board was used between 1989 and 2016 in Studio 3 at TVNZ's building on Victoria Street West, one of four working studios. The floor manager at the time was Lindsay Benbrook.

In TVNZ's current building, Studio 3 is used to record Marae and the twice-weekly Lotto draw. In the past, Studio 3 has been used for the 2019 Rugby World Cup coverage, the country's national elections, the *Good Morning* show and game shows such as *Wheel of Fortune* and *Blind Date*.

Courtesy of TVNZ

Parabolic Microphone

This example of a parabolic microphone dates from the 1960s, and little is known about why it was purchased and what programmes it was used on. Parabolic microphones were used for recording outdoors and were worn by a sound operator who would point the device in the direction of the sound to get the best results. The microphone would be connected up to a tape recorder or film recording which would capture the audio.

The invention of directional microphones, such as the Sennheiser 816, made sound recording much easier as they were smaller and lighter.

Courtesy of Graham Wallace, TVNZ



The Medium is the Message, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

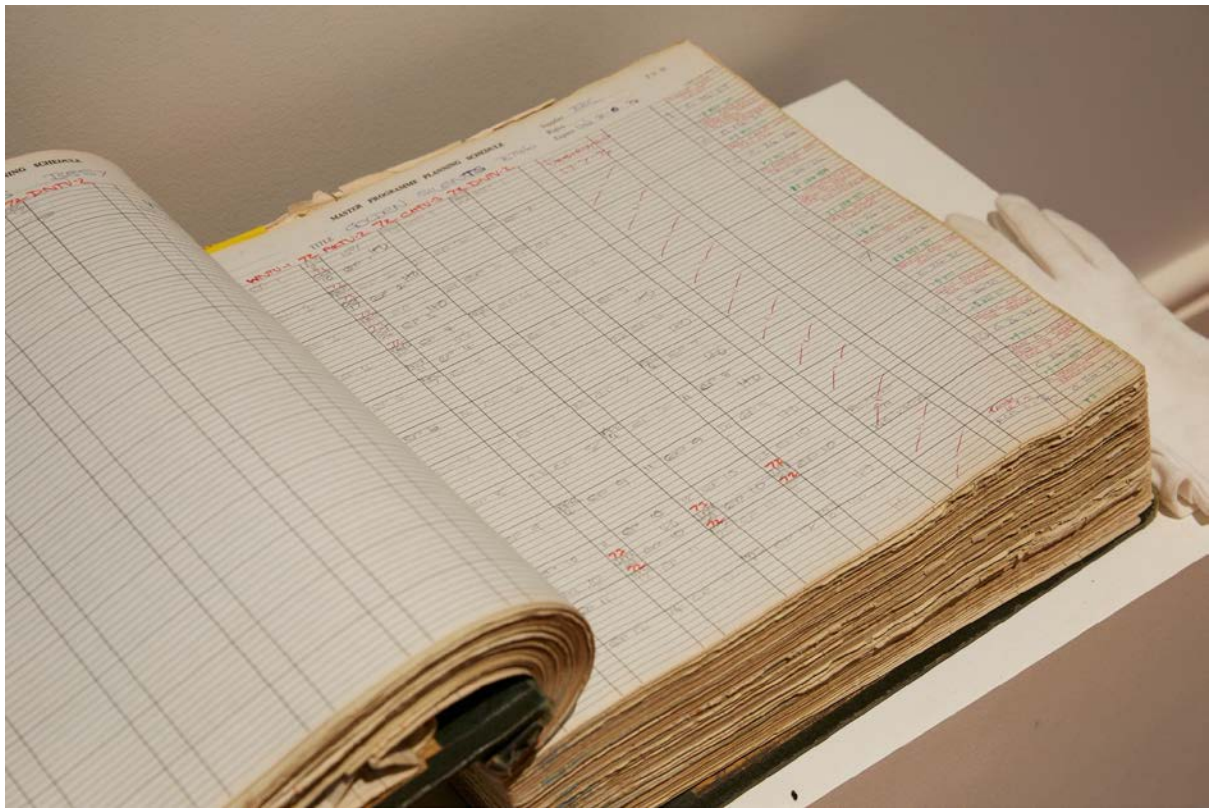
Master Programming Planning Schedule

In the 1960s the four television centres in New Zealand were unlinked, which meant that film prints and videotapes of programmes were physically sent around the country to each of the regional centres where they were transmitted locally. Tapes were also shared internationally. In order to keep track of the whereabouts of each of the videotapes, paper records such as this original master programming planning schedule were used by the Programme Traffic Department.

This particular schedule covers all of the programmes from letters F to M at the time, and such schedules would have been used until TVNZ moved to computerised record keeping. On each page, the television programme and its regional studio are listed along with the dates sent and received. The names of the television programme appear in ink and the dates entered in pencil so any errors or changes could be rectified.

The process for sending film and video tapes around the country involved many stages. The material was couriered from the airport to the head office in Wellington for cataloguing and approval, before a technician checked for any damage to the tape's material. A censor viewed the episode to ensure it met legal guidelines and suited its scheduled timeslot. Sometimes, tapes were sent back to the broadcaster if deemed inappropriate. When ready for transmission, the material was sent to a room called 'Presentation and Transmission' where it was loaded onto a machine and played out live. If adverts were needed, the tape had to be manually stopped for them. This process was repeated every week, as each episode was sent to and transmitted in each of the four regional television centres.

Courtesy of Nigel Windsor, TVNZ



The Medium is the Message, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

NZBC Television 16mm Feature Film, *Texas Across the River*

This is a film print of comedy western *Texas Across the River* from 1966. In the early days, 16mm films were loaded onto a device called a telecine machine for transmission, and later onto videotapes.

The benefit of film reels was that they could be edited easily, sent to any country in the world and played on equipment without any need of conversion to the correct transmission standard. Videotapes had electronic broadcast compatibility problems as America used the NTSC (National Television System Committee) standard while New Zealand and Britain used the PAL (Phase Alternating Line) transmission standard. An NTSC tape could not be played on PAL equipment and vice versa, unless the tapes were converted electronically.

Films were however prone to damage, which could be caused by handling errors or faults with projection equipment. The physical joins in the prints could break and the print could fade over time if not kept under strict atmospheric and temperature controlled conditions.

In order to screen films, the broadcaster would purchase the rights to the film while legal ownership of the work remained with the film distribution company.

Broadcasters were often granted a fixed amount of time to transmit the film. After this time, the film was either destroyed, retained until the rights were re-negotiated for another transmission, or more commonly, sent back to the rights holder or sent to another broadcaster for transmission in another country.

Courtesy of Nigel Windsor, TVNZ

BBC Enterprises 1 Inch 'C' Format Video Tape

Over the years TVNZ has purchased vast amounts of programming from the BBC such as *Fawlty Towers* and *Doctor Who*. Many of these programmes were flown out from BBC Enterprises in England and supplied to TVNZ on one inch 'C' format video tapes, such as the one on display here.

This tape is a professional reel to reel analogue recording videotape format co-developed and introduced by Ampex and Sony in 1976. Despite having a BBC Enterprises label on its container, there does not appear to be a BBC programme on it as the TVNZ label suggests the contents of the tape to be a tennis match. Once the original rights to show the BBC programme had expired, TVNZ sometimes purchased the tape from the BBC and recorded their own material over it. This saved on administration and freight costs as it meant fewer blank tapes would need to be purchased.

The one inch format video type was adopted around the world as the 'preferred format of choice' for the transmission of recording or broadcast television productions. 'C' format machines were embraced by sports productions, because for the first time, slow motion, frame advance and reverse functions could be achieved as the game was being played. The action replay function was a major step forward in television sports production, made possible by one-inch machines being deployed in outside broadcast vans in sports venues around the country.

Courtesy of Nigel Windsor, TVNZ

AMPEX 2 Inch Quad, Commercial Cassette

A cassette such as this would typically contain one thirty-second television advertisement. With an ability to hold up to three minutes of broadcast quality video, cassettes were used to play in house promotional material such as adverts for upcoming television programmes.

Prior to the day's transmission schedule, the cassettes were brought to the transmission room on a trolley and the tapes loaded into a large, automated machine called an AMPEX ACR 25. Whilst the main programme was on air, a video tape operator loaded the machine with up to twenty-four adverts in preparation for the upcoming commercial break. They would enter the sequence of adverts into a machine using information from a printed schedule of the day's television commercials that listed its name, duration, time of play, catalogue number and whether the advert would play once daily or be repeated.

The machine could be programmed with up to forty events per advert break. Once the main television programme was stopped for the advert break, the ACR25 played its allocated sequence of commercials. When complete, the ACR 25 operator would unload the cassettes that were not needed for the next break, and reload the machine with other scheduled commercials. Nowadays, all commercials are played out on computer data files.

Courtesy of Phil Hobden, TVNZ

AMPEX 2 Inch Quad Tape in leather box

This is an early example of a two inch quad tape, manufactured by Emitape of Great Britain.

The tape condition card shows the tape was in use around 1976 and in the "where used" category, the letters "AV" are shown, which was the Avalon building in Wellington. The last entry shows it was dubbed to digital in 2006.

Today, the Television New Zealand Collection is housed at Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision where over 60,000 hours of television are archived in vaults. Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision is a charitable trust that care for an ever-growing collection of films, radio, television, sound recordings, props and documents spanning 120 years of Aotearoa New Zealand's sound and moving image history.

Courtesy of Phil Hobden, TVNZ

AGFA 2 Inch Quad Tape

This type of tape, also known as a two inch quadruplex videotape, was the first practical and commercially successful analogue recording video tape format. It was developed and released for the broadcast television industry in 1956 by Ampex, an American company based in Redwood City, California. The first videotape recorder using this format was built in the same year.

The two-inch quad tape format revolutionised broadcast television operations and television production. It replaced film used for kinescopes, the only recording medium previously available to the television industry. Kinescope images were usually of inferior quality to the live television broadcast images they recorded, whereas quadruplex videotape preserved almost all the image detail of a live broadcast.

A typical 4,800 ft (1,463 metre) reel of two inch (51 millimetre) quad tape holds approximately one hour of recorded material at 15 inches per second. The example displayed here was manufactured by AGFA of Germany. The tape length is 762 metres, which can hold approximately thirty minutes of broadcast quality footage.

The programme code is "T.O.T.U" and the episode is *Glowing Future*. This is an episode from the series called *Tales of the Unexpected* which first aired in Britain in 1981.

Courtesy of Phil Hobden, TVNZ

TVNZ ¼ Inch Audio Tape

This is a 1/4 inch wide tape that was only used for recording sound. Broadcasters would use these tapes for recording sound effects, music, voice overs and more.

The tape is a form of magnetic tape audio recording where the recording medium is held on a reel that is not permanently mounted in an enclosed cassette. In use, the supply reel, or feed reel, containing the tape is placed on a spindle or hub. The end of the tape is manually pulled out of the reel and threaded through mechanical guides and a tape head assembly. It is then attached by friction to the hub of the second, initially empty take-up reel.

The tape featured here is labelled 'B.T.J' for Billy T James, so we can assume that the content was used for his self-titled television show for TVNZ. James' comedy and live performances became a New Zealand institution and lasted for seven series on TVNZ.

Due to the need to re-use film tapes, almost all of the first (1981) and second series (1982) were wiped by TVNZ. The second series saw James introduce his first recurring character called Pierre the Painter, who would paint pictures while telling a story. The third series was the first to survive in full and saw the introduction of a parody of the Māori news show *Te Karere* entitled "Te News". The black singlet and yellow towel James wore in these sketches were to become iconic.

Courtesy of Nigel Windsor, TVNZ

AMPEX 2 Inch Quad Tape in a green box

According to the cue sheet, the programme featured on this tape is the final episode of *A Good Age*. The producer of the programme was Robin Scholes who went on to become a founding partner and managing director at Communicado.

Scholes has worked alongside many New Zealand film makers early in their careers, including Lee Tamahori on local blockbuster *Once Were Warriors*, with Gregor Nicholas on *Broken English* and Christine Jeffs on *Rain*.

Once Were Warriors (1994) marked the first feature film for Scholes and she paid credit to Lee Tamahori for directing it "with very little money and very little time." She recalls that after repeated turndowns, the project finally gained funding from the New Zealand Film Commission thanks to an impassioned speech on its importance by then Gisborne police commander Rana Waitai. Distributors at the premiere screening took bets on how little money it would make and Scholes says the belief then was that "Māori stories would not succeed" commercially.

Once Were Warriors was a box-office hit and provoked national debate. The film also won rave reviews from overseas and brought director Tamahori to Hollywood attention. Scholes successfully produced inter-racial romance *Broken English* for director Gregor Nicholas and, like *Once Were Warriors*, it was a film where Pākehā culture barely featured.

Courtesy of Phil Hobden, TVNZ

TVONE Film Print

This is a 16mm film print of the Canadian-British romantic adventure film released in 1966 called *The Trap*. Written by David D. Osborn and directed by Sidney Hayers, *The Trap* was filmed in the wilderness of British Columbia and stars Oliver Reed and Rita Tushingham in this unusual love story about a rough trapper and a mute orphan girl. The soundtrack was composed by Ron Goodwin and the main theme is familiar as the title music used by the BBC for London Marathon coverage.

The TVONE label suggests this was transmitted in the 1970s or 1980s, and is reel two of a three reel set.

Courtesy of Phil Hobden, TVNZ



The Medium is the Message, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.

BBC Flesh Tone Reference Chart no.61

A flesh tone reference chart was used to ensure a consistent colour reproduction of people's faces in television. The person in the image is twenty-two year old Lynne Holmes from South-West London, a former member of staff at the BBC photographed in 1976.

The need for a flesh tone chart occurred with the arrival of colour television, as cameras needed constant adjustment to ensure correct colour accuracy. In a multi-camera studio, each camera needed to look the same, so that the viewer at home would not notice subtle differences in colour. Before recording, the vision engineers aligned the cameras using several test charts and a white piece of card to ensure a consistent neutral colour reference across all cameras to be used in the studio. This period before recording started was called the 'line-up'.

Although modern digital television cameras require fewer adjustments today, the flesh tone chart is still used for training and alignment purposes.

Courtesy of Anthony Chapman, TVNZ



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Greer Twiss

Mr Throgmorton

1960s

Mixed media, 800mm x 200 x 100mm

Mr Throgmorton was the announcer on Greer Twiss' popular television show *Puppet Playhouse*, which screened regularly on AKTV2 during the 1960s. Bedecked in a smart houndstooth suit created by Twiss' mother Kay, the puppet sat at a desk smoking cigars, and announced the acts on each episode. Twiss' parents assisted him in manipulating a wide variety of marionettes, including dancers, bands and animals.

Twiss went on to become a well-known New Zealand artist, best known for his bronze sculptures.

Courtesy of the artist



The Medium is the Message, installation view, 2020. Photography by Sam Hartnett.